this processing. Therefore, in principle, we agree that things should move faster, but we all know how our system works. Various as puts have to be seen various analysis and examination of issues have to be done. Therefore only certain projects are put on a fast track. But to put every project on a fast track, I do not think it will be possible even if it is desirable. The second thing that the hon. Member has said Sir, that the Central Government should also look at the transport sector and accept proposal like this. Again, in priciple, I would agree with him. But the Central Government has gone much out of its way to fund the project in the road sector. A project of Rs. 54,000 crores is now taken up by the Centre, totally changing the face of the road system in the country. We have also been providing Rs. 1,000 crores per year to the State Governments under the Central Road Fund for the State roads. We have also taken up the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojna which again is around Rs. 50,000 crores. Therefore, a massive amount of investment is going on in the road sector. But, if you say that every project that comes up must be accepted, I think, this will not be possible.

Meeting of foreign ministers

*142. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:††

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the informal meeting in New York, the Indian, Russian and Chinese foreign ministers have agreed to meet officially for holding discussions between the three countries;

(b) if so, whether any date has been fixed for the meeting;

(c) if so, the agenda fixed for this meeting; and

(d) to what extent these three countries have formulated action plan to give a fillip to their relationship and have agreed to a concrete plan of action on various issues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) At the informal luncheon meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Russia, China and India held on the margins of

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the house by Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy.

the UNGA in New York, it was agreed that they will continue to meet in the same format.

(b) No Sir.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise at this stage.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Madam, actually this question was put by Mr. Natwar Singhji and me, but since he is out of country I will be representing both. Now, my first point is we are extremely happy and nation is very happy when Shri Yashwant Sinha has taken the opportunity to have an in informal meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Russia and China. But in the reply it has been said that there is no plan to have any further meetings. It was a great event when he had an informal meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Russia and China. I feel many common problems could be settled. Firstly, the Indo-China border problem; and for controlling terrorism across Pakistan border; Russia has to play a very important role. Here, in this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister, the Chair and also this august House to the fact that Russia had asked Pakistan to dismantle all terrorist camps. This statement was issued in Moscow on 26th. This is very important and it—the New York meeting and the planeed future meeting should be borne in mind by the hon. External Affairs Minister. It says, "Condemning the terrorist attack on Raghunath temple in Jammu, Russia has asked Islamabad to dismantle all terrorist camps on Pak-controlled territory....." it further says....." We stress that.....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you reading their statement? Or, do you want the Minister's statement?

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Madam, I am only saying that it is very important. The statement stressed by saying, "We stress that the primary condition of the cessation of terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir is the complete fulfilment by Pakistan's authorities of the obligation assumed for the eradication of the terrorist infrastructure in the country." I would like to tell the hon. Minister that, when Russia is coming forward outrightly supporting us and giving a call to Pakistan to eradicate all the terrorist camps, we must take this opporutunity to have one more informal meeting, as has been decided in New York, with the Foreign Ministers of Russia and China. As per the newspaper reports, it was decided... the hon. Minister

may know the actual position ....to have informal discussions. You had discussed issues pertaining to terrorists, Iraq and on verious other problems. So, may I know from the hon. Minister as to what actually transpired in the informal discussion that took place in New York?

Part (b) of my supplementry is, by taking this opportunity of Russia condemning Pakistan and also asking them to eradicate terrorist camps, is the hon. Minister planning to have one more meeting?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Madam, in the informal meeting held in September, in New York, the Russian, the Chinese and the Indian Foreign Ministers exchanged views on topical issues of the Agenda of the 57th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The meeting.....

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: I want to know whether hon. Yashwant Sinhaji attended the meeting or Mr. Digvijay attended the meeting...*(Interruptions)*...I want to know this ..... *(Interruptions).* No, no. I want to know this. Mr. Yashwant Sinha attended the meeting and he should reply....*(Interruptions)*.....

उपसभापति: आप पहले बैठ तो जाइये।....(व्यवधान)....

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: No, no.... *(Interruptions)*.... Madam, Shri Yashwant Sinha must reply.... *(Interruptions)*....

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: आप पहले जवाब सुन लीजिए।...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: The meeting passed in a friendly, business-like atmosphere and an agreement was reached to continue contacts in this form. That is all that happened in New York.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Put your second supplementary.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Madam, before putting my second supplementary, I have a point to make... *(Interruptions)*... Madam, you have to help me? ... *(Interruptions)*... Don't your want to help me? ... *(Interruptions)*... I want that when Mr. Yashwant Sinhaji attended the meeting, he must give the reply ... *(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If I am not helping you, I would not have given you five minutes to formulate your thoughts.

श्री मूल चन्द्र मीणा: मैडम, यह जवाब तो हमने पढ़ लिया है।...(व्यवधान)..

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Madam, hon. Shri Yashwant Sinha has to give the reply.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Madam, the reply to the main question says, 'The three Ministers agreed to meet in the same format.' What is that 'same format?' The format is to meet informally and without a set agenda. The press release, which was issued by the country which hosted this, namely, Russian Federation, as in the reply, says, "The agreement was reached to continue contacts in this format. This is what we have reflected in the reply---that we will continue to meet. And we are grateful— the hon. Member is very right in saying what our Russian friends have said--to the Government and the people of Russia for the continuous and unstinted support that they have extended to us on the question of terrorism and especially, cross-border terrorism.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Madam, my second supplementary is this. On November 19, 2002, the newspaper reports says that the hon. Prime Minister is likely to visit Islamabad in January, 2003,... he is supposed to go this year but he is going next year. In this connection, I would like to know from the hon. External Afairs Minister whether he will take this opportunity to have one more informal meeting, as early as possible, to discuss, with the External Affairs Minister of China, the Indo-China border issue because already there is a big statement that the Government has already started and making efforts to settle the Indo-China disputes and it is taking a good shape. Therefore, taking advantage of this and before the hon. Prime Minister reaches Pakistan, is it not possible for the Government to make an effort to have another informal meeting with them? I want to know this.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Madam, I think, I would like to make it clear, through you, to the House, that in this meeting we would not bring up bilateral issues; Namely, in the trilateral meeting that Russia, China and India will have, we will not start discussing the Indo-China boundary question or will not start discussing anything which is bilateral. This meeting is primarily aimed at trilateral co-operation, if there is something that all the three countries can do together. We will exchange views on global issues. As it has been stated in the reply, there was certain agenda for this session of the UN and we exchanged views with regard to the items on the agenda. So, it will remain informal. It will remain trilateral. It will deal with global issues. It will deal with cooperation among the three countries. But there is no intention to bring up bilateral issues. As far as the question

of China is concerned, recently, a meeting was convened at the official level; and Madam Deputy Chairperson, perhaps, the hon. Member is aware that bilateral issues had been discussed there. We are making progress. This trilateral meeting does not debar the Foreign Ministers from meeting bilaterally. We have been meeting bilaterally. Russia and India will be meeting bilaterally; China and India will be meeting bilaterally; and China and Russia will be meeting bilaterally. But this trilateral meeting has a certain purpose; and that purpose, as I have explained, is trilateral cooperation and exchange of views on global issues.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Madam Deputy Chairperson, for quite some time, the question of unilateralism in global relations, and the manner in which the fight against global terror is being sought to be hegemonised is a cause for concern. Particularly, the developments in Afghanistan have given rise to a certain kind of sense of concern among the regional powers, including Russia and China. So, will the Government of India consider developing this trilateral process, which is a very welcome development, to take note of these changes and these concerns; and, also of the crisis point that we have almost reached *vis-a-vis* the Iraq question? Will it try to do something to remove the doubts and concerns that are increasingly emerging among the developing countries?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Madam, we shall have a discussion, later, in this House on the situation in that region. Then, I am sure, this question will come up. And, I will, perhaps, then, be in a position to give a reply. But, as I said, in this trilateral meeting—the last one that was held—we discussed global issues. So, the issues which were of concern at that point of time also came up. The question of Iraq also came up. We exchanged views. Now, there are certain concerns and whenever we get opportunity we will express those concerns. It is not that we are missing any opportunity to express our concern. There is absolutely no doubt in our mind. The hon. Prime Minister has, from time to time, stated that we are in favour of a multilateral approach, rather than a unilateral approach.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. We have a Short Duration Discussion also.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Yes, Madam, we do have. But I am not going to put any question. I am just welcoming the approach of the hon. Minister, of keeping aside the bilateral issues at this forum, because there should be a commonality of issues; and because, many issues that

are emerging will determine our relationships with the other countries. To deal with the bilateral issues, we have well-established Joint Commissions and other mechanisms, through which we can take up bilateral issues. But India, the Russian Federation and China, having a common approach on the global issues, would set an agenda for many others to support it. Therefore, these informal arrangements, informal consultations, should be focussed only on the global issues. That is my suggestion to the hon. Minister. I am not putting any question.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Madam, it is an excellent suggestion. I am in complete agreement with it.

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे: माननीय उपसभापति महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूं कि जो तीन विदेश मंत्रियों की मीटिंग हुई, अनौपचारिक मीटिंग थी, जाहिर है उसमें हर प्रकार की बात हुई होगी। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या यह भी चर्चा हुई कि अमेरिका ने आतंकवाद के संबंध में जो दोहरा मानदंड अपना रखा है और दोहरी परिभाषा अपना रखी है, उसके संदर्भ में भी क्या आपकी कोई बातचीत हुई है? क्या ये दोनों राष्ट्र आपकी बातचीत के माध्यम से अमेरिका के आतंकवाद के प्रति रवैये की खुले आम निंदा करने के लिए तैयार हुए? यदि हां तो आप बताएं, यदि नहीं तो क्यों? आपने इस बारे में क्यों बात नहीं की?

श्री यशवंत सिन्हा: उपसभापति महोदया, जैसा मैंने कहा आतंकवाद के ऊपर सामान्य चर्चा हुई आतंकवाद के बारे में भारत का जो दृष्टिकोण है उसको बिल्कुल साफ शब्दों में रखा गया, लेकिन यह तो अनौपचारिक बैठक तीन विदेश मंत्रियों की हुई उसमें हम किसी विशेष देश को टारगेट करके नहीं चल रहे हैं और ऐसा होना भी नहीं चाहिए, जिसमें यह लगे कि हम कोई गुट बना रहे हैं, या कोई इस तरह की बात कर रहे हैं क्योंकि अगर ऐसा होगा तो मैं सदन को विश्वास में लेकर कहना चाहता हूं कि इस पहली बैठक को होने में 14 वर्ष लगे हैं। यह आज का विषय नहीं है, यह विषय लगातार 14 वर्षों से चल रहा था और पहली बैठक होने में इतना विलम्ब हुआ। यह स्पष्ट है कि सारे लोग सावधान रहना चाहते हैं कि आखिर इसमें हो क्या रहा है। इसलिए इसको अनौपचारिक बनाया गया और अगर किसी देश के साथ हमारी कोई समस्या है, सिर्फ संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका के साथ ही नहीं बल्कि और देशों के साथ भी अगर इस प्रकार की कोई बात है तो हम उनके साथ बार-बार बातचीत करके उनको कन्वींस करना चाहते हैं कि कहीं न कहीं कोई कमी है। उनके दृष्टिकोण में है। लेकिन इस माध्यम से करें, यह आवश्यक नहीं है।